

# Perth Amboy to meet DEP

## Runyon Watershed pollution is topic

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Officials of Perth Amboy and the state Department of Environmental Protection plan to meet Tuesday at Perth Amboy's City Hall to discuss "critical issues" involving the spread of industrial pollution at the Runyon Watershed, the source of the city's drinking water supply.

"We want to present our report to the DEP and discuss it face-to-face to make sure it comes across clear," Fletcher Platt, Perth Amboy's consulting environmental engineer, said yesterday.

Expected to attend the meeting with DEP officials are Assistant New Jersey Environmental Prosecutor Charles Licata, Mayor Joseph Vas, and city engineering and legal consultants.

The two Old Bridge industries found responsible by the courts for contaminating Runyon — CPS Chemical Co. and Madison Industries Inc. — were not invited to the meeting, officials said. The city's special environmental attorney,

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## discuss tainted water

geologists and are doing some of our own individual analysis," Hagerty said.

"Killam is the primary source; they are the independent contractor that's looking at this on behalf of the city. We're taking a look at all the data combined, seeing where we are: Is it [the cleanup] effective, or do we need to be doing something else?"

"We should be ready next week with our report on the status and effectiveness of pumping."

The cleanup, which began Jan. 26, involves pumping polluted ground water from the watershed, treating it, and discharging it into the Old Bridge Municipal Utilities Authority sewer pipeline.

From the MUA line, the water is sent to the Middlesex County Utilities Authority

in Sayreville for treatment and discharged into Raritan Bay.

Pollution problems at Wells No. 5 and 6 have kept the city from considering a proposal by the industries to change the cleanup plan.

In separate proposals made in February, the two companies suggested putting treated Runyon ground water back into the Old Bridge aquifer beneath the watershed property.

The proposals to "recharge" the aquifer require Perth Amboy's approval.

Consulting engineer Platt has advised the city not to consider the changes because their effect on the ground water is unknown.

## DEP, Perth Amboy officials to

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Joseph Maraziti Jr., said the two firms will be invited to a future session.

Platt said the priority topic at Tuesday's meeting will be the apparently growing plume of chemical and metal pollution in two of the five key city wells at Runyon, a 1,260-acre Old Bridge tract which supplies 30 percent of Perth Amboy's drinking water.

The contamination is apparently spreading despite a state-supervised project, begun in January, to halt and remove the pollution.

A confidential report prepared on behalf of the city by Platt's firm, Killam Associates, state that the drinking well

designated No. 6 has shown a steadily increasing level of chlorobenzene, a cancer-causing volatile organic chemical.

The most recent test results show that raw water from Well No. 6 contained about 12 parts per billion of chlorobenzene. New Jersey's standard is 4 parts per billion.

However, city officials stressed that the raw water is treated several times before it is delivered to Perth Amboy faucets, where the chlorobenzene level shows 2 parts per billion.

The city on Tuesday temporarily shut down Well No. 6 and began drawing water from a newly operational collector well.

However, the city continues to operate Well No. 5, whose raw water, the Killam

report says, is "imminently threatened by zinc contamination which may exceed drinking water standards."

Madison Industries, a zinc-processing firm, and CPS, a manufacturer of specialty chemicals, were found by the courts in the early 1980s to be responsible for polluting a portion of Runyon. The Madison-CPS site was ranked fourth out of New Jersey's 103 Superfund sites in 1990.

DEP spokesman John Hagerty yesterday said the agency was still reviewing data before issuing its report on the effectiveness of the Runyon cleanup.

"We're taking the reports and data collected by independent engineering firms hired by CPS. We have our own

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